

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 USUN N 02005 172200Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-11
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P 172200Z MAY 78
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1421
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 02005

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, PDEV, PBOR, CD, FR
SUBJECT: CHAD: FRENCH MISSION COMMENTS ON CURRENT STATUS
- AND PROSPECTS

1. FRENCH MISSION COUNSELLOR GARRIGUE-GUYONNAUD AND FIRST
SECRETARY DUQUE TOLD POLMIN AND MISOFF AT LUNCH MAY 16
THAT FRANCE'S MAIN OBJECTIVE IN CHAD IS TO GET RENEWED
AGREEMENT TO A CEASE-FIRE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF PRESI-
DENT MALLOUM AND THE NORTHERN REBEL FACTIONS, TO BUY TIME
FOR BOLSTERING MALLOUM'S REGIME. FRANCE IS NOT PRESENTLY
CONCERNED WITH SETTING A PRECISE CEASE-FIRE LINE, BUT THE
CURRENT STATE OF HOSTILITIES GENERALLY DEFINES AN IRRE-
GULAR LINE RUNNING ROUGHLY EAST AND WEST JUST NORTH OF
NDJAMENA. FRANCE IS COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING THE MALLOUM
GOVERNMENT, BUT IT IS FAR FROM CERTAIN THAT THE MALLOUM
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 USUN N 02005 172200Z

REGIME WILL PROVE VIABLE OVER THE LONGER TERM. IN ADDI-
TION TO OBVIOUS FUNDAMENTAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS
AFFECTING THE COUNTRY, MALLOUM IS INCREASINGLY OPPOSED BY
A NUMBER OF PERSONALITIES AND GROUPS IN THE SOUTH.
FRANCE'S COMMITMENT, HOWEVER, IS AT THE BEHEST OF A NUM-
BER OF FRANCOPHONE BLACK AFRICAN STATES, AND FRANCE'S
LONG-TERM INTEREST IN WORKING WITH BLACK AFRICA REQUIRES

THAT IT CONTINUE WITH ITS COMMITMENT TO THE BLACK GOVERNMENT IN CHAD.

2. GARRIGUE-GUYONNAUD SAID PARIS INTENDED TO WORK DIPLOMATICALLY ON THE CAPITALS CONCERNED (SUDAN, NIGER, CAMEROON, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC AND NIGERIA). THE FRENCH ALSO ARE DISCUSSING THIS PROBLEM WITH THE OAU PRESIDENCY IN LIBREVILLE. THEY HOPE THAT THESE INFLUENCES WILL FORCE DISCUSSION OF THE VIOLATION OF THE APRIL CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT BY THE LIBYA-SUPPORTED REBELS AT THE OAU SUMMIT SCHEDULED FOR JULY IN KHARTOUM. ALTHOUGH THE USUAL AFRICAN CONCERNS ABOUT AN OPEN SPLIT BETWEEN NORTHERN AND SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA MAY BAR FORMAL DISCUSSION AT THE SUMMIT, THE PROBLEM IS LIKELY TO BE TAKEN UP BY THE PARTIES CONCERNED ON THE FRINGES OF THE CONFERENCE.

3. FRANCE HAS APPROACHED LIBYA, WHICH INDICATED THAT IT AGREED THAT THE CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN BROKEN BY THE REBELS. IN VIEW OF THE OBVIOUSLY CONTRADICTIONARY POSITION TAKEN BY LIBYA IN THIS AND OTHER APPROACHES, FRANCE HAS CONCLUDED THAT IT IS USELESS TO ATTEMPT TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE UNPREDICTABLE AND UNRELIABLE QADHAFI.

4. GARRIGUE-GUYONNAUD SAID FRANCE HAS ONLY MINIMAL INFORMATION

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 USUN N 02005 172200Z

FLUENCE WITH NIGERIA AND SUGGESTED THAT THE US COULD BE OF ASSISTANCE TO FRANCE IN ELICITING A CONSTRUCTIVE NIGERIAN RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEM IN KHARTOUM. POLMIN SAID THAT THE US INTEREST IN A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF SUCH CONFLICT NO DOUBT WOULD PROVIDE A GENERAL BASE FOR DISCUSSION OF THIS PROBLEM WITH THE NIGERIANS. HE SUGGESTED, HOWEVER, THAT IF PARIS FELT OUR ASSISTANCE COULD BE USEFUL IN LAGOS, THE FRENCH SHOULD CONSULT IN PARIS AND IN WASHINGTON, PROVIDING A MORE PRECISE OUTLINE OF THE STATE OF FRANCE'S DIPLOMATIC PLAY AND AN INDICATION HOW THE US COULD HELP.

5. GARRIGUE-GUYONNAUD SAID FRENCH COMMITMENT TO THE BLACK AFRICANS TO PERSEVERE IN THEIR SUPPORT OF THE MALLOUM GOVERNMENT VIRTUALLY TIED FRANCE TO ACQUIESCENCE IN AFRICAN STRATEGIES FOR WORKING AT THE CHAD PROBLEM. SPECIFICALLY, PARIS SEES NO POSSIBILITY FOR THE TIME BEING THAT THE PROBLEM CAN BE DEALT WITH CONSTRUCTIVELY IN THE UN. FRANCE, HOWEVER, AGREES IN PRINCIPLE WITH THE BASIC POINT THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL SHOULD BE MORE READILY AVAILABLE TO THE WORLD IN EFFORTS TO RESOLVE SUCH CONFLICTS. LEONARD

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